

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 INT-05 TRSE-00 EUR-12 /045 W

----- 033439

R 151010Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4782

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 1150

E.O. 11652: GDS-3

TAGS: ELAB PINS SF MZ

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CUTOFF OF SOUTH AFRICAN MINE LABOR FROM
MOZAMBIQUE

1. LABOR OFFICER HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM TWO WIDELY SEPARATED SOURCES (PROJECT) (PRETORI-BASED BRITISH LABOR ATTACHE REPORTING INFO FROM ANGLO-AMERICAN MINES SOURCE AND BOTSWANA-BASED MINE LABOR RECRUITMENT OFFICIAL) THAT MOZAMBIQUE HAS REFUSED FOR PAST SEVERAL WEEKS TO ISSUE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS TO ITS CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN RECRUITED FOR WORK ON MINES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2. AFTER RECEIPT OF FIRSTREPORT (FROM BRITISH LABOR ATTACHE) MINERALS OFFICER ATTEMPTED TO VERIFY REPORT. RELIABLE SOURCE TOLD OFFICER HIS MINE, AT LEAST, CURRENTLY RECEIVING ALL LABOR IT REQUIRED FROM MOZAMBIQUE.

3. GIVEN GREAT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MOZAMBIQUE THAT CUT-OFF OF SOUTH AFRICAN MINE LABOR RECRUITMENT WOULD ENTAIL (ESPECIALLY ON TOP OF RHODESIAN RAILROAD BOYCOTT), SUCH ACTION BY MOZAMBIQUE SEEMS UNLIKELY. ON OTHER HAND, SO DID RAIL BOYCOTT. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE MOZAMBIQUE MAY BE RESTRICTING RECRUITMENT OF NEW MINE EMPLOYEES
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AND ATTEMPTING TO FORCE SOUTH AFRICA TO RETAIN OLD EMPLOYEES ON

QUASI-PERMANENT BASIS. THIS WOULD RESTRICT NUMBER OF MOZAMBIQUENS SUBJECT TO "CAPITALIST" INFLUENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA WHILE AT SAME TIME CONTINUING GOLD PAYMENTS FOR SUCH LABOR FORCE FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO MOZAMBIQUE. BOTSWANA SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION ALSO INDICATED CHAMBER OF MINES IS ATTEMPTING TO NEGOTIATE NEW AGREEMENT WITH MOZAMBIQUE WHICH WOULD ALLOW IT TO MAKE DEFERRED WAGE PAYMENTS TO MOZAMBIQUE AT CURRENT MARKET PRICE FOR GOLD RATHER THAN AT OFFICIAL RATE. THIS, TOO, MIGHT EXPLAIN MOZAMBIQUE REFUSAL TO ISSUE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS IN TERMS OF SIMPLE PRESSURE TACTICS.

4. GIVEN CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN MOZAMBIQUE, IT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE A CONTINUATION OF SUCH A TRAVEL BAN (ASSUMING REPORTS ARE ACCURATE) UNLESS THEY HAVE RECEIVED OFFERS OF SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM OTHER SOURCES. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WORKERS DOCILELY ACCEPTING MORE OR LESS PERMANENT SEPARATION FROM BOTH THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR LANDS.

5. POST WILL CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS REPORT FROM OTHER SOURCES. MEANWHILE, COMMENTS FROM INFO ADDRESSEES WOULD BE WELCOME.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MIGRATORY WORKERS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, MINING INDUSTRY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976JOHANN01150
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760274-0790
From: JOHANNESBURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760756/aaaabwzo.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE CUTOFF OF SOUTH AFRICAN MINE LABOR FROM MOZAMBIQUE
TAGS: ELAB, PINS, SF, MZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006